Can verb morphology be primed in aphasia?

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**BACKGROUND**

Tense morphology in Agrammatic Aphasia
- Errors in production of tense morphology are frequently reported in a variety of languages and tasks:
  - *Yesterday Mary walk to work; *Cinderella working all day

Two possible sources of the tense impairment need investigation
1. Conceptual encoding of tense information (e.g., yesterday→PAST) or using this information to access tense morphology (e.g., +PAST→V+ed)
2. Encoding and producing tense morphology (V+ed→)

**PURPOSE & HYPOTHESIS**

Use priming methodology to delineate the two sources of deficit

1. A conceptual encoding &/or use impairment will benefit from congruent tense primes, regardless of morphological overlap
   - Production of kissed will benefit equally from prior exposure to skipped or swam
2. A morphological impairment will benefit from morphological overlap only
   - Production of kissed will only benefit from prior exposure to skipped but not from swam

**PROCEDURES**

**Task:** Picture description using a single sentence and the temporal adverb provided, verbs were pre-trained.

Participants: 9 with agrammatic Broca’s aphasia (3 female, age: 37-66y)
10 young normal controls (11 female, age: 18-23y)

**RESULTS**

- Aphasic participants were less accurate than normal participants
- The following conditions were significantly more accurate than baseline for aphasics
  - Identical prime (I)
  - Congruent tense-congruent affix (CC)
  - Congruent tense-incongruent affix (CI)
- The following conditions did not differ
  - Baseline and incongruent tense-incongruent affix (B-II)
  - Identical and both congruent tense conditions (I, CC, CI)

**REFERENCES**


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